



**MARITIME ADMINISTRATION
FACT SHEET**
Maritime Security Program (MSP)
Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement (VISA)



America's Advocate for the Maritime Industry

Current MSP Companies

American International Shipping, LLC
APL Marine Services, Ltd
Central Gulf Lines, Inc.
Farrell Lines Incorporated
Fidelio Limited Partnership
Hapag-Lloyd USA, LLC
Liberty Global Logistics, LLC
Luxmar Tanker Corporation
Maersk Line, Limited
Maremar Tanker Corporation
Patriot Shipping LLC
Patriot Titan LLC
Waterman Steamship Corporation

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Strategic Objective: National Security: Assure that sufficient sealift capability and intermodal transportation infrastructure exists to support vital homeland and national security interests.

Mission: Strengthen the U.S. maritime transportation system—including infrastructure, industry and labor to meet the economic and security needs of the Nation.

Operation Iraqi Freedom:

20 VISA (including 3 MSP) vessels chartered by Military Sealift Command

78 VISA (including 65 MSP) vessels utilized by Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command in their liner service

VISA Participation

1. 49 Companies
2. 125 Ocean Going Ships
3. 195 Tugs, barges and other vessels

VISA Open Season

The Maritime Administration conducts an annual open season during which additional companies may apply to enroll in the VISA program.

**Maritime Security Program (MSP)
Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement (VISA) Program**

The MSP serves to maintain an active, privately-owned, U.S.-flag and U.S.-crewed liner fleet in international trade. This fleet is also available to support the Department of Defense (DOD) sustainment in a contingency.

On November 23, 2003 the MSP was reauthorized by the Maritime Security Act of 2003. The reauthorized program is for fiscal years (FY) 2006-2015 and provides funding for 60 ships. Annual funding authorization for FY 2006-2008 is \$156 million and increases to \$174 million in FY 2009-2011 and \$186 million for FY 2012-2015. As of October 1, 2008, 59 vessels were enrolled by 13 U.S.-flag carriers.

The MSP helps retain a labor base of skilled American mariners who are available to crew the U.S. Government-owned strategic sealift fleet, as well as the U.S. commercial fleet, both in peace and war. MSP is responsible for retaining approximately 2,400 U.S. citizen mariners.

The structure of MSP encourages flexibility as operators are able to upgrade their fleets to compete in the global marketplace. During FY 2008, seven MSP ships were replaced with newer ships increasing military useful capacity by over 362,000 square feet. Maritime Administration approvals are required to ensure that vessels entering the MSP meet Maritime Administration and DOD requirements. The Maritime Administration and the U.S. Coast Guard have established expedited procedures to encourage reflagging of modern, efficient vessels into the U.S. fleet.

MSP carriers must commit 100 percent of their MSP vessel capacity and related intermodal transportation resources to Stage III of DOD's approved Emergency Preparedness Program, VISA. MSP contributes over 77 percent of the total capacity committed to VISA. VISA operators without MSP contracts are required to commit 50 percent of their U.S.-flag capacity to Stage III of the VISA program.

VISA provides DOD with assured access to commercial intermodal capacity to move ammunition and sustainment cargo. The objective of VISA is to maximize DOD's use of the multi-billion dollar, state of the art, U.S. commercial intermodal transportation system to serve America in peace and war while minimizing disruption to commercial operations.

VISA activation would be time-phased to streamline the availability of capacity to coincide with DOD requirements.

VISA Joint Planning Advisory Group sessions, with participants from the Maritime Administration, DOD, and industry, test the ability of the maritime industry to meet military requirements.